05/12/2014 ~~Of~~ the Cathedral – to Shlomo Gazit

- ~~As~~ As t~~T~~he year 2015 begins, ~~is upon us –~~ we find ourselves ~~are~~ at the height of a historic earthquake, in multiple dimensions~~multi-dimensional historical earthquake~~, the like of ~~one~~ which hasn't been seen since the end of WWI and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

- In the Middle East – within three~~3~~ years, the "Arab spring" ~~has~~ turned into the "Islamic winter" – b~~B~~orders have vanished ~~been wiped out~~ and centuries ~~hundreds of years' worth~~ of conflicts between tribes and factions are erupting~~have erupted~~ onto the surface.

- The~~A~~ bi-polar and multi-polar world we knew has been replaced by a world with not even one geo-political center of gravity. It is a ~~The world turned into are~~ ~~is a~~ G~~g~~estalt in which everything depends~~is dependentd~~ on everything else, and dealing with the ~~every~~ challenges requires ~~requires~~ global cooperation ~~in order to deal with it.~~

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- ~~In sort somewhat of a "perfect storm",~~ Israel finds itself ~~as~~ at the center of a kind of "perfect storm," the only outpost of the western way of life in the Middle East – at the meeting point of the "clash of civilizations" between Islam and the West, as Huntington envisioned it, and ~~while~~ at the same time, ~~being~~ in the spinning "eye of the storm" of the clash of titans within Islam itself: ~~.~~ B~~b~~etween Sunni and Shi'ite, between tradition, extremism and terrorism on the one hand, and modernity and moderation on the other; ~~.~~ B~~b~~etween the dream of "past glory" and the vision of a "leap~~"~~ into the future". And all of this is drenched in a lot of blood.

- This drama that has washed over~~stormed~~~~washed~~ the Arab world bears~~carries with it~~ two lessons and one insight for us:
The 1st lesson: "Be modest in~~careful of false~~ prophe~~sy~~~~ciests~~". In particular, when it comes to the future. Mubarak for example~~,~~ had about 400,000 people at his disposal working in ~~the~~ various security agencies in order to preemptively predict events such as those that took place at ~~"~~Tahrir~~"~~ S~~s~~quare. And he did not foresee the uprising~~it.~~ So who can?

The 2nd lesson: W~~w~~hen friends, and even ~~we are being told by friends, and even by~~ the leaders among us, say: "D~~d~~on't get swept into ~~be drawn into~~ a panic – if something really grave~~severe~~ happens (Iran for example) ~~happens~~ – the US will not stand by. The world will take action!"

And I say: Don't bet on it. Look at ~~See~~ Syria. Assad has massacred 200,000 of his own people – with tanks, artillery, fighter jets, even chemical weapons – and the world did not lift a finger.

And the one insight: To all our opponents and even friends who tell us that our lack of success in reaching an agreement with the Palestinians is the root of all the troubles in the Mmiddle Eeast – the original sin! – I say: this is not true! Even if I, in 2000 (or Rabin and Peres in 1994' or Olmert in 2008), – were to have reached reach a peace treaty with the Palestinians – which would have been has already been implemented a long time ago – still – the "Muslim Brotherhood" would still have taken control over Egypt and Ael-Sisi would still have taken it back a short time after.

- Syria still would still have been embroiled in the midst of a bitter civil war. And Iran – would have still be strivinged for regional hegemony and nuclear military capability.
- The reasons for all the above are deeply rootedseeded in the history of the nations and the area – and do not stem from the Israeli Palestinian conflict (they may be are related to it perhaps in another way, which I will get to later on).

- In the new reality forgedc byformed as a result of the "Arab Sspring," there is good news and bad news for us.
  Let'slets start with the bad news:
  ISISIsis, the disintegration of Syria, the events in Iraq – all of these areis is bad news that proves to us, time and time again, that the Middle East is indeed a trough neighborhood. There is no mercy for the weak, and there will be no second opportunity for to those who don't know how to defendprotect themselves. Every year, new threats arise. And the old ones: Hezbollah, Iran, terrorism –are all "alive and kicking" and growing even stronger.

But there is also good news too. Israel is the strongest country in the region, from Tripoli in Libya to Tehran. It's the strongest – militarily, strategically, and economically, and if we **know** how to **act** wiselyproperly – also diplomatically too. Equally important: Israel will continue to be the strongest country in the region in theany foreseeable future – especially if we manage to identify and cultivate succeed in identifying and nurturing these sources of empowermentpower and advantage – including:

- An army capable of defeating any outside combination of threats, including terrorism.
- A strong and growing economy – in an open symbiotic relationship with global markets.
- Foreign policy that assures international backingup, especially American – diplomatic and economic- backing for Israel's positions, – and which holds the "moral high ground" vis-a-visunlike our enemies and opponentsrivals..

- The fact that Israel is stronger than any combination of enemies – is what enables us gives us the fulcrum to act from a position of strengthpower and self confidence in order to change the reality : to counterpush back the threats and to se maximize the opportunities.

- ~~A few words about each one of the threats:~~Let me elaborate briefly about each of the threats:

Two ~~2~~ ironies and one insight about Isis.

Assad slaughtered 200,000 of his people~~citizevilians~~ including by using ~~some with the use of~~ chemical weapons – and that wasn't enough to get the British parliament and Prime Minister Cameron or the American ~~c~~Congress and President Obama to act.

- Then, ISIS beheaded~~cut off the heads of~~ two journalists (not really a new practice in the Middle East) in front of the cameras – and within 48 hours the world was united against them. Better late than never, so we have little~~no~~ reason to complain about the result. However, there is something to learn about the superficiality of the decision-making process in our world~~here~~.
Second: let's assume for a moment that ISIS is restrained in about a year (and hopefully – crushed) – who wins~~won~~?
- The main winner is Assad, since ~~is Assad. W~~when the Coalition would have wiped~~wipes~~ out his main adversary, freeing him ~~and allows him~~ to focus more intens~~iv~~ely on the rest of the rebels – meaning the "moderate" rebels, ~~–~~ which the Coalition purports to train and reinforce in order to take him down.
Iran also wins and of course Hezbollah - a~~A~~ll members of President Bush's Axis of Evil. In other words: the Coalition is doing some of the "dirty work" for them.

- In my best assessment~~estimate~~, the Turks are right in their position that there is no point in striking ISIS unless you also set a goal to take down Assad, and act to achieve it.
The Turks are right in their call for a "humanitarian strip" – 25-30 km into Syrian territory along the borders, and declare~~ing~~ it a "no fly zone", a place for ~~to allow~~ refugees (there are several million of them) to assemble ~~there~~ and where they can receive~~allow~~ humanitarian aid~~action for treating them (there are several millions of them)~~.

- What hasn't been said explicitly is that such a deployment might lead sooner or later to ~~an~~ engagement with the Israel Air Force – followed by the Syrian aerial defense – which~~and that~~ could develop into an opportunity to fundamentally change the balance of power and the course of the war against Assad's regime.

And one insight: ISIS may not be as strong as it is being portrayed. One intense, ~~and~~ coordinated action during the next year or two, particularly if performed according to the Turkish outline and with massive Turkish involvement – could well put the Genie~~may just well be a Genie that's put~~ back into the bottle ~~during the next year or two~~. However – let us make no mistake – ISIS is part of the radical Islamic web of terrorism. A web that is loosely knit, yet survives on ~~a~~ **strict**ly restricted resources ~~**diet of means**~~ – and demonstrates~~reflects~~ operational flexibility, survivability and a fanatic adherence to the goal.

- We're talking about ALQ, Jabhat al-Nusra in Syria, Lashkar-e-Taiba in India, the "Houthis" in Yemen, the "Shabaab" in Sumali, "Boko Haram" in Nigeria and many more – all across the Muslim strip, from Marrakesch to Bangladesh.
- And this web is very resilientdurable. Dealing with it will takeis going to be a war lasting that lasts for a generation, and not just a few years. The struggle – The struggle must include will require collaboration not just between the moderate Arab nations and Turkey – but a long-standing collaboration between the US, Russia, China, India and Europe –- all areeveryone to some extent – are potential possible targets and victims of this terror everyone to some extent. Forging Creating this collaboration is categorically much more important -than the events in Ukraine or the NorSouth Chinese Sea Islands.

- Hezbollah is busy in Syria – and as a rule would generally prefer to avoid provoking Israel. There are Some here who would say that Nasrallah has been is deterred, that the memory of 2006 is still fresh in his mind and he will not act. I have my reservations about from the deterministic nature of this statement. "Deterrencement" is a somewhat elusive term. This is not a "zero sum game" on a one-dimensional bar. This is a complex and context-relatbased issue. Although under normal circumstances, the most common state is that each side has a fundamental position that applies to normal situations (let's assume for a moment that Hezbollah'sthe position is "avoiding provoking Israel") – it is still not hard to imagine an event, or damage to Hezbollah's (or Nasrallah's) assets or prestige, thatwhich cwould lead it to action, despite its basic principal position, to take action, contrary to what's caused by itstheir true fundamental position.
- Incidentally, this doesn't apply solely to "Hezbollah" – but also to us too.
- Therefore, the working assumptionhypothesis and the operational deploymentestimations must include the possibility of deterioration for into a wide-scale confrontation with Hezbollah.

- And now,from here to Iran – which under certain circumstances might be the element that ignitespushes or incites "Hezbollah" into action.
- Let us be clear – a nuclear Iran is a centralmain threat tofor the entire world order, not just Israel. A nuclear Iran means the end of the age of nuclear non-proliferation regime– Saudi Arabia, within months, Turkey within a few years and Egypt mightas well will probably follow as well–and all will become nuclear.
- Every third--graderate dictator will be able to ensure his survivability against the outside world by following in the footsteps of Pakistan, North Korea and Iran.
- The "countdown" towards the troubling vision of Prof. Graham Allison of Harvard about nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists bodies – this countdown, even if it takelasts for 15 years, will start.begin – Ttherefore, blockstopping Iran from becoming a "threshold nuunclear statecountry" is crucial, and justifies everyany effort.

- Right now diplomacy is we're in hiatus a diplomatic pause at least until March 2015. It's hard to imagine a good agreement with the P5+1, and a bad agreement

would be best left unsigned. The problem is that the Iranians have no real incentive to reach a "finaln agreement" that wouldwill keep them from becoming a nuclear power.

- As far as they're concerned-, at any given timemoment, an improved "interim agreement" would beis better (unless the P5+1 yieldfold into a bad agreement.)

The Iranians are veryquite sophisticated. In their opinionperception (I emphasize: in their opinion), the American government- has changed its goal without admitting it, from "Iran will not have military nuclear capabilityies. Period." to "Iran will not have military nuclear capabilityies on during our watch term."

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This is of course a completely different thing. And this perception only reinforces Iran's obduracy stubbornness and the delayinghindering tactics that they've adopted.

- Israel has a supreme interest in "keeping all the options on the table". However, today, mostly against the backdrop of the prolonging drawn-out talks – Israel has an interest into maximizing itse the understanding with the United States and trying to convince it of the need for determination and perseverance; for . Of the advisability of putting "sticks" as well as next to the "carrots"; – and of the importance of completely losing any illusions regarding the complete disillusion in regard to the objectivesof the goals of the Ayatollahs' regime.

- And from here, a sharp segue to the diplomatic challenges Israel faces,: from the minorlight (for now) to the majorheavy.
- Israel is far from being a leaf in the wind. But thein a world has no where there's not one geopolitical center of gravity – not the US, Russia, Europe or China –- Israel isn't is also not omnipotent either.
- It is wrong to disregard what's happening in Europe. It will not be resolved by sayingruling that Europe is riddenfilled with anti-Semitism (even though there's quite a bit of truth to thatit).
- Regarding BDS, I would say to To the members of the Cabinet and the "Big Eight"- I would say in regards to the BDS – as long as these voices are coming from Eritrea or Mauritania, we can live with itthat for years. When it comes from Scandinavia and the BritaniaUK Britain – it'sthat's a different story, and must be taken seriously.
- Right now **it** is being espoused by parliaments, not governments. But it could expand – to trade unions, to the academia, to consumer organizations and NGOs. And then, heaven forbid, eventually to governments – which will say "we are of the peoplelive amongst our people". We mustn't forget that Europe is Israel'snNo. 1 tradinge partner - not the US and not China. And Europe, with – next to North America and a few countries in the East, is at the heart of the "reference group" of liberal democratic countries – to which we want to belong, and rightfully so.

- This leads us to the US – and there, thewhich is a far greater diplomatic challenge is far greater. Israel is a sovereign state. On more than one occasion, I've told President Obama, and before that to Presidents Bush and Clinton, the following: "Oin issues that we believefeel are essential to the security and future of Israel and of the Jewish people, Israel will- make itsthe decisions alone and on its own responsibility and act upon themaccording to them. We cannot, and will not want to",- I added, "delegaterelinquish the responsibility for suchthese decisions, if and when they are required, even to the best of our friends – which is you." The US presidents, I note, did not always like were not always fond of this statement – but they respected it.
- In the same tokenmanner, I told members of the cabinet more than once – "we must always remember that the US is also a sovereign state. And it expects us to respect its right to form its positions on the issues crucial to it, based on its own interests and responsibility.". And we have to respect that.

- And Without derogating from our responsibility to make and execute sovereign decisions – the reality isthe level of disillusion implies that there isn't full symmetry here.
- Our The relations with the US President, the administrationgovernment, and the Ceongress and the American people are vital to the State of Israel.
- The United States is Israel's main ally and strategic support. Our relations with it are the cornerstone of Israel's military capabilities, the IDF's qualitative edy advantage, and Israel's strategic and political positioning.
- We receive $3 billion a year from the US, going back (for some 40 years now). What Which social or economic budget items would we forgo deprive of ₪12 billion in order to make up the ₪12 billion gap if- without this assistance disappears?
- They're the only ones who can provide us with F-35 jets, the best aircrafts in the world.
- These are mutually beneficial relations. The US also benefits from the unprecedented cooperation between our intelligence services. And But so do we. We never expected, and will never ask others to fight for us – yet and still – the US has deployed advancedunique radars systems in Israel to provide for early warning againstagainst long-range missiles, and holds military exercises is exercisingpreparing on our soil and in the Mediterranean Mediteraenean, preparing an American response for assisting Israel in case Israel it has to defend itself against missile attacks from Iran on our soil and off our shores.
- We received about $1 billion from the US, by order of President Obama, for "Iron Dome", and the assistance for the David's Sling and Arrow programs continues.
- We turn to the US to veto hostile initiatives against Israel in the United Nations Security Council. Or to soften the conclusions of the Goldstone Commission and its ilkothers like it.
- It is to them that we turned We turned to them (and they responded to the best of their abilitythe best they could) in rather tense times, when a handful of our

people were besieged in the embassy in Cairo, with- an angry mob- and at the door, an angry mob..

- Secretary of State Kerry, and President Obama – wenthave gone to great lengths – while and paidpaying a considerable political (and often personal) price – to help us achieve reach a breakthrough with the Palestinians, though. tThe effort did not succeedwas not successful. Nor We also did wenot succeed (Rabin and Peres, myself, Olmert and Bibi as well). They shouldn't be ridiculed and debased for this. They should be appreciated. Even if we do not agree on all the details.

- We will yet need their help in facing still need their support while facingbe called to help them with many trials in the future.

- I recommend that we all remember this well. The rules of working with the Americans: Do not Do not stand idly by. Do not Do not fold. Yes – remember what the U.S. is for Israel. AndRemember – yes. MaintainUphold – almost at almost any costall costs – mutual relations of trust and respect. It's good for Israel.

- This is good for Israel. The American Congress, President Obama, Biden and Kerry are part of the solution, even if it tarries. will take long time to see itis delayed. They a're not part of the problem.

- Ben Gurion used to say, with usingwith his iron logic, without interpretation, that "the future of Israel depends on our strength and our righteousness."
"Our strength" – that is the IDF's might and its strategic capabilities, the backing of the superpowers, the power support, ourthe economic strength, and our social solidaritythe people's unity.
"Our righteousness" – not as an abstract concept – is the grasp ofour the capacity to holdconquer the"moral high ground" by means of a calculated effort to behaveact and be perceived as acting in good faith – to obtain peace, even if it is delayed.

- This is also anis an essential condition for for achieving internal solidarity and the world's support **for Israel (or for the support of most of the world that's important to us).**

- This is also an essential condition for achieving internal solidarity unity and willingness for sacrifice in a society where being called for battle or routinely risking your life is not a theoretical notion, but rather part of a our lifethe experience that keeps repeatsing itself time and again.

- The spirit of fighting spirit, resilience the ability to standing ability and the internal solidarity are allthat's deeply bound to both – our strength and our righteousness. Our righteousness is just as important as our strength.
Our righteousness, and not our strength in and of itself, is what gives Zionism's the struggle of Zionism its meaning and sense of purposepoint (especially for ones who can choose). The support of a superpower

- The backing of a Super Power (US)power support and the resilience of ourthe society and economy, which are among thesome of the components of our "strength" – will never be will not come without recognition of our

righteousness. And without it, they will erode ~~if it's gone.~~

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- This is the time to point out the risk in ~~danger in~~ the weakening of the cohesive forces which hold the~~glue that keeps~~ Israeli society together. We are turning into an increasingly ~~We're turning more and more into a~~ divided society whose very fabric seems to be ripping ~~is about to be ripped~~ apart, and which is riddled with hatred for one another. Left and right. Jews and Arabs. Secular and religious. Rich and poor. Center and periphery. Old and new. This is dangerous. The late Tunisian ~~late~~ President Bourguiba (and later on Sadat in his debates with Assad just~~moments~~ before the peace treaty with Israel) made the argument that there's no need to defeat Israel by force. Give them the opportunity – and they will collapse from within. But the opposite is true!
  We have no intention of collapsing from within. But this requires that we come to our senses and act with the right national priorities~~y~~ in mind for society and the economy.~~in the social and economic fields.~~
- The ~~A high priority for the~~ young generation~~,~~ ~~of~~ the future, must be prioritized. And to those groups in ~~of the~~ society who carry its burdens:working hard, paying taxes and serving in the IDF.~~,~~ Cultivating ~~Nurturing~~next ~~to~~ mutual respect, openness, tolerance, and acceptance of others.~~,~~ M~~is a m~~ore equitable distribution of the national wealth, equal opportunities for all~~everyone~~, and encouraging individuals, groups and communities to take responsibility. All of these are part of our mission – and we have a long road ahead of us.

I am concerned about our ~~"urges~~addiction to internal quarrels~~"~~ just as much as I am concerned about our conflicts with external opponents~~rivals~~~~"enemies"~~. Our "righteousness" will not prevail and our "strength" will crack over time if we do not act decisively~~spire~~ to establish, gradually yet persistently ~~and decisively~~, ~~the~~ norms of public life and civil society – which sets~~shape~~ ~~the~~ norms for ~~boundaries of~~ what is done and what isn't done far above ~~and beyond~~ the criminal threshold.~~'s appropriate and what's inappropriate~~. We need profound change in the area of ~~Improved public life norms has to be set regarding the~~~~We must move away from the criminal norm and~~ respect for the rule of law, standards of~~and~~ governance, keeping~~protecting~~ the thin line between freedom of expression and freedom of incitement – and immediately hitting the brakes on racism and Jewish terrorism – which in my opinion should be treated~~investigated~~ ~~deep~~ within the criminal domain.~~ world~~.

- A few sentences on ~~This brings us to~~ the ~~new~~ "nation-state law". This is a redundant and even harmful law. In general, and particularly at this point. To our friends it signals that Israel is losing its self-~~-~~confidence regarding the obvious – namely~~in other words,:~~ its unique identity as the Jewish-democratic state as reflected by the "Declaration of Independence".
  To our enemies it ~~shows that we're single-handedly~~ provides~~ing~~ an effective tool to make Israel a suspect~~suspected~~~~icious~~ – of being ~~as~~ a country that's wittingly ~~knowingly~~ drifting away from the norms of democracy – as a preliminary step towards institutionalized discrimination.

And one has to wonder: what was wrong with what we had until this point? What's wrong with the "Declaration of Independence"? Who needs this? And why?

- Churchill once observeddiagnosed the difference between an optimist and pessimist.
  The pessimist – sees the difficultly in every opportunity
  The optimist – sees the opportunity in every difficultly.
- We have opportunities before us within all of the difficulties. The most important of all, athe rare one, of the kind that comes once in a generation – is the opportunity to establish a regional agreement. It is all the more important – its existence is more prominent in light of the "Arab Spring" and following after "Operation Protective Edge".
  There is am opportunity exists to establish a regional agreement that will fundamentally changes the map of reality map of the region and Israel's future and statuspositioning within it. An agreement that will movemarch the region's entire economy forward together withforward and the chance for stability and peace ,based on synergies and collaborations rather than hatreds and revenges.

- What do I meanWhat does this refer to? The events in recent years of the past few years have created a strong commonmutual interest for Israel and the moderate Arab countries – Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, Jordan, Egypt and perhaps even Turkey (which is not Arab). The focal interest is– the struggle against radical Islamic terrorism and against Iran's hegemonic and nuclear intentions.
- The challenge for us is based on there being, apparently, only is that there seems to be only one way to achieve that; and the , t. The upcoming elections in Israel force us require that we to put it on hold for a few months.:
- And the way to do it is this: a strong, self-confident Israel, which is willing to holdlaunch serious negotiations with the Palestinians and the group of Arab nations withinunder an international conference, backed bywith the support of the US and the Quartet – in order to achieve a two-state solution andnext to establishing a regional agreement, . All this while maintaining an unyielding firm and persistent fight against terrorism and ensuring the IDF's qualitative military edy advantage over any combination of opponents.

- The most moderates among of Arab rulers are unable (and also unwilling) to float this commonmutual interest and turn it into policy – because they worry 're worried about how their people would respond. This is how the wayroad in which the Palestinian issue is relatedbound to possibility of anthe chances for an overall agreement in the Middle East.
- And this isn't just ana mere assessment.

- We must remember, vis-a-viswith the Palestinians, Israel can (practically only) give. mostly (and practically only) has something to give. Regarding With the rest

of the moderate Arab world – Israel can also get, and a lot.~~has a lot to get~~~~receive~~. Not just recognition and legitimacy~~,~~ but also an opportunity for regional infrastructure projects – and mostly – for the beginning of a process, protracted though ~~long as~~ it may be – to change the region~~al~~'s fundamental attitude~~position~~s towards Israel.

- On the road to seize this opportunity – Israel will have to consider embracing the Saudi proposal, with ~~alongside~~ Israel's reservations, ~~–~~ as a basis~~the foundation~~ to negotiate ~~for negotiation of~~~~the debate over~~ a regional agreement.
- This will~~is going to~~ take time. There will ~~are going to~~ be ups and downs. The Palestinians are not an easy interlocutor. No one knows that better than I do.~~I should know~~.
- This might require long periods of interim agreements and even calculated unilateral steps that are coordinated with the US and the Q~~q~~uartet.
- It is possible that within the context of a regional agreement, the Palestinian State, once~~when~~ established, could be integrated into a ~~the~~ structure ~~construct~~uction ~~of a~~ closer~~tighter~~ cooperation that could include Jordan, Israel and perhaps another regional player.
- But ~~in order~~ to advance ~~promote~~ the chance of a regional agreement after the elections in Israel – the Palestinian issue and the two-state solution must be ~~–~~ ~~have to be~~ at the top of the agenda.
- The idea that'~~s brought up from time to time by~~ the radical right raises from time to time – to continue to rule the entire territory and maintain a sort of "autonomy" for the Palestinians – is an illusion at best, and the first step of an upcoming blame game ~~–~~ at worst. It will be brutally rejected by our closest friends – not to mention by each of the potential partners for the regional agreement – and by all of them together. This too ~~is also~~ is not a mere assessment.

- The claim that the events of the past year "prove" that Israel's vital security needs are incompatible~~cannot be integrated~~ with the "two-state solution" – is false. And I'm stating this as a professional position, not a political opinion.
- On the contrary – the IDF will be able to defend Israel better from an internationally recognized border that includes the s~~S~~ettlement blocs, a number of strategic sites on ~~the back of the~~ mountains ridge, a security zone east of Ben Gurion Airport and long-term military presence on the Jordan River.

- The real threat to the future of the Zionist Project~~enterprise~~ – is not the security constraints~~restrictions~~ of the "two-state solution" but rather ~~the~~ a slippery slope leading ~~– which will lead us~~ to the "one-state solution" – a reality that would~~will~~ compromise Israel's security and worsen~~increase~~ its diplomatic isolation – while necessarily [INEVITABLY?] (and this is the keyword) leading Israel into becoming a non-Jewish or non-democratic state. Not to mention the danger of descending ~~delving~~ into severe, perpetual~~deep, generations long~~~~ongoing~~ hemorrhaging, lasting generations, by the two national communities ~~locked in embrace~~ as we

have ~~between generations of two~~ unseperable ~~national communities, which will become inseparable – like we've~~ seen in Belfast and Bosnia.

- The vision we all share – the vision of a "model society" in Israel, ofi~~s~~ positioning~~put~~ ~~getting~~ Israel, within 10-15 years, ~~to the front row of the world's most advanced countries within 10-15 years~~ among ~~into~~ the group of the most advanced ~~cutting edge~~ societies – in education and culture, science and technology, quality of life~~ving~~ – and eventually standard of living (Finland and Denmark can do it? So can we!). A society in which ~~where~~ its sons and daughters choose to live ~~in it~~. And one that young Jews from all over the world consider a source of pride, inspiration – and even a worthy place to live in.

- The vision of a "model society" will not materialize~~happen~~ unless we gather our mental strength and political will~~aspirations~~, despite the pain and the differences in our positions – and together embrace the "two-state solution under a regional agreement" – which even if it ~~is~~ delay~~sed~~ – is the only appropriate and feasible solution, the only~~in the complex world of the 21st century – Zionism's~~ realistic and proper goal for Zionism in this complex world of the 21st century.~~.~~

- A friend (from the Likud, actually) told me that when he was young, he visited Ben Gurion's home a few times. In one of their conversations, the boy asked the Old Man: "how is it that out of all of the people's leaders in the past 2,000 years, and even in the past 80 years, it was you who ended up founding the Jewish State?" And the Old Man answered: "In ancient times, everyone had a sixth sense, a sense of recognizing opportunities. This sense ~~has~~ disappeared over time – in~~for~~ most people. But not for me! I saw an opportunity – and I seized it."
Ben Gurion did not speak of the horrors of the War of Independence, the doubts, the risks. Everyone assumed he would fail. He talked about the opportunity and recognizing it. And the deed.

- Like Ben Gurion at the time, Menachem Begin – with Egypt, and Rabin – in the peace treaty with Jordan, and later Peres – with the first steps towards the Palestinians, ~~–~~ took huge ~~massive~~ national, diplomatic, security and political risks. Some ~~of them also~~ paid a heavy price. Yitzhak ~~–~~ paid the ultimate price. But they all dared – and acted. This is the true test of leadership. This is also the real~~big~~ test of creative stetesmanship~~diplomacy~~.
- Formative~~Shaping~~ leadership had always been~~forever shall be~~ rooted in a rare combination and fine balance ~~–~~ between vision, daring and ~~,~~courage on one hand~~,~~ and judgment, complete sobriety and grasp of~~understanding of the~~ detail~~s~~ on the other. They will not come where anxiety, pessimism and passivity~~veness~~ rule – these are recipes for the creating of self-fulfilling (necessarily pessimistic) prophecies.

- The essence and the purpose ~~of the existence~~ of the Zionist movement was to defy ~~defying~~ the~~are defining~~ reality and the mindset~~"state of mind"~~ that the Exile ~~Galuth~~Diaspora created. Its ~~Their~~ foundation lay~~lies~~ in the decision to take ~~charge~~

~~of~~ our own fate in our own hands and move~~act~~ proactively to change reality, a~~.~~ ~~A~~nd not be swept away by the arbitrary waves of history.

- Reality ~~iy i~~s knocking on our door. Not everything is certain. Nothing is ever certain. And nothing ever will be. Nevertheless – open the door – this is the ~~goal and the~~ true trial of the national leadership.
- Abba Eben used to say – the Palestinians have never missed an~~y~~ opportunity to miss an opportunity.
- Let's not fall into this trap – ourselves.

- Thank you.